All agreements are contingent upon strikes, accidents and other delays unavoidable or beyond our control. Conditions are subject to change without notice and are subject to Harvey Standard Terms. Conditions and Mill Standard Tolerances.

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11/29/65

Dear Sol,

Your letter arrived Friday as we were leaving to spend the first weekend in a year with my family (all well). In the same mail was a letter from M.S. Eyeth, Managing editor of Harper's, which has committed itself to publish the Kennedy-subsidized Manchester book, but reseeing the Warren Commission. An editor in a different department at Harpers had encouraged me to send him the book. He didn't read it because of Manchester. I wrote him and offered all my materials, pointing out that there is great hazard to both the Kennedy family (personal friendships with Cass Canfield, head of Harpers) and the publisher if there is a subsidization of a false book by the family. He may think I'm a nut.

Independently, two people had directed me to the Haper's salesman for this territory, an experienced man rather unlike a salesman; an intellectual. I gave him a copy Wednesday night. By last night he and he wife had both read it. He told me this morning that if I will permit him (as, of course, I did) he is calling Norton, which is represented by Harper's salesmen, asking them to pick up the copy that might not yet have left Harpers. If it has left I'm to deliver a copy tomorrow. I'll be leaving for New York about 5 a.m. and may, if I can accomplish what I plan, return tomorrow night. His appraisal of the book is that it is "terrific". He is "very impressed". Both he and his wife were "quite excited" by it, and neither could "put it down". Her judgement has for many years been helpful to him in his business and she concurs in his opinion that this book has "excellent sales potential. He wrapped it all up by saying "you write very well".

Lil and I are both at the point where such praises no longer depress us, unless we are already feeling depressed for another reason. But how many times what I have just told you has happened I cannot begin to guess. There has yet to be a single adverse editorial comment on the book, and most have gone out of their way to praise it while turning it down.

Re: Ivan, if he can be sued, he is worth money personally (Astor's).

The stories you refer to are condensations of a pot-boiler by Sylvan Fox, who had been asked to write the book by Award Books, a paper-back outfit. He says the Commission was right but there are still questions, an approach that gets nowhere, has no reason to excite people or sales, and serves no useful purpose. This book has been entirely without reviews or comments and I fear, while hoping otherwise, that it will not sell. That will hurt me more. The Lane book, from what I was told two weeks ago by Macmillan's editor, has appeared in England and will in two months in paperback in the US. It seems to have escaped comment if his information is correct. I have no confirmation.

I have finished the draft of the next book "Oskar The Human Goose"., It is a charming story, but I don't know about the book. I have never done that kind of writing and believe it requires a deftness I do not have. I plan to submit it in the Dutton contest. And that's about it. Thanks and best all around.

(warmest berks)